

SUMMER VILLAGE OF GRANDVIEW

POLICY #26-2011

SUBJECT: Code of Ethics and Conduct

DEPARTMENT: Council

ADOPTED AND APPROVED BY COUNCIL: October 1, 2011

A. POLICY STATEMENT

The *Municipal Government Act* (the "MGA"), Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Part 5 regarding Council and Councilors, requires and expects certain behavior for members of Council.

B. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy is intended to establish standards for professional, courteous conduct for Members of Council and Committees of the Summer Village recognizing the importance of maintaining the highest levels of integrity and ethical behavior, both in and out of Council Chambers.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. **Committee:** a committee, board, commission, authority, task force or any other public body established by Council
2. **Conflict of Interest:** a situation that occurs when a Council or Council committee is performing a function to which the Common Law imposes a duty that Councilors have an open mind and are free of perception of bias.
3. **Council:** the elected Council of the Summer Village of Grandview.
4. **Pecuniary Interest:** a situation as defined and regulated by the MGA, Section 170-173
5. **Summer Village:** the entity of The Summer Village of Grandview.

D. CODE OF ETHICS

To provide good governance of the community, the Summer Village Council has adopted the following ethics to apply to all Councilors to ensure that they act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interest of the Summer Village as a whole:

1. Councilors agree to respect the personal views of other Councilors and the decisions of Council.
2. Councilors agree that they may publicly express their own opinions on Council matters but not so as to undermine the standing of Council in the community.
3. Councilors agree that they will incur expenditures in a responsible manner
4. Councilors agree to avoid situations where pecuniary interest or conflict of interest would apply
5. Councilors agree to act with integrity and respect when interacting with Council, staff, and members of the public, and
6. Councilors agree to demonstrate fairness in all dealings and conduct while being open with and accountable to the community at all times.

To show their commitment, each individual Councilor will sign their agreement/acceptance to adhere to this Policy.

This Policy should be reviewed annually by Council at the Organizational Meeting.

E. APPLICATION OF CODE OF ETHICS

1. Respect for Other Councilors' Personal Views

- a. Informed decision making and ultimately good governance is derived from healthy debate through the exchange of views by Councilors in the appropriate forum – the Council Chamber
- b. While Councilors will sometimes disagree with the views of their colleagues, good decision making will be enhanced if those views can be heard and considered.
- c. All Councilors are given an opportunity to the views of others through the Chair; these responses should be made in a well spirited and responsible manner so as to promote healthy debate and ultimately lead to good decision making.
- d. All Councilors should feel confident to be able to express their views in Council Chamber without unnecessary interruption.

2. Respect for Council Decisions

- a. Council decisions result from a majority of Councilors voting in a particular way. Not all decisions are unanimous and Council recognizes that individual Councilors are entitled to their own opinions
- b. Unless subsequently revoked or amended, a decision of Council is legally binding and must therefore be implemented.
- c. Without compromising the rights of individual Councilors to maintain opposition to a Council decision, those Councilors must both accept and respect the decision made by the majority of their fellow Councilors through the democratic voting process.
- d. While it is acceptable for an individual Councilor to publicly state that they did not vote in line with the majority of their Council colleagues, this must always be done in a manner that is respectful of Council's decision.

3. Public Comment

- a. While Councilors are entitled to publicly express their own opinions on Council matters, this should be done with open acknowledgement of and respect for any Council or Committee decision that does not support a Councilor's viewpoint.
- b. Individual Councilors may publicly disagree with a decision of Council or a committee but shall refrain from making any statements likely to damage the public perception of Council or the committee.

4. Expenditures

- a. When incurring expenditure on behalf of Council, Councilors are required to act responsibly, as public monies are expected to be used for the public good
- b. Councilors shall avoid situations where an expenditure can be questioned as inappropriate and create adverse comment that might result in undermining the standing of Council in the community.
- c. Council provides detailed guidelines about the nature of expenditures that Councilors can be reimbursed for. This policy should be adhered to at all times.

5. Pecuniary Interest or Conflict of Interest

- a. Councilors should be familiar with Part 5, Division 6 of the MGA regarding pecuniary interest.
- b. The decision as to whether a Councilor has a conflict of interest, or might reasonably be perceived to have a conflict of interest, is a decision for the Councilor to make.

6. Interaction with Staff and the Public

- a. Councilors will respect the professional opinions of Summer Village staff and be mindful that the CAO is exclusively responsible under the MGA for directing those staff.
- b. While it is acknowledged that Councilor/Staff interaction can be beneficial, Councilors must not abuse the relationship by attempting to take advantage of their position as a Councilor
- c. It is expected that Councilors will act with integrity when interacting with staff. Requests for information will be directed to the CAO or in a manner specified by the CAO. Councilors will at all times, refrain from behavior which may be considered to be bullying of staff.
- d. Councilors will treat all people with courtesy and respect:
 - 1.) Recognizing that there are legitimate differences in opinion
 - 2.) Equally regardless of race, culture, religion, language, gender, disabilities or occupation
 - 3.) Dealing with all persons in good faith and without bias, ensuring equity of access to Summer Village services, and
 - 4.) Providing an adequate opportunity for persons to state their position.

7. Support for Actions

- a. Prior to taking any action, Councilors should ask themselves whether their intended action will ultimately be supported by other Councilors and the Summer Village community. This test is designed to promote objectivity in the mind of a Councilor to best ensure appropriate conduct. If in doubt, Councilors will consult the Mayor or the CAO beforehand.

F. CODE OF CONDUCT

To provide good governance of the community, the Summer Village Council has adopted the following code of conduct to apply to all Councilors to ensure that they act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interest of the Summer Village as a whole:

1. In performing the role and functions of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councilor or a member of a committee, a Councilor
 - a. Must act honestly
 - b. Must act in good faith
2. A person who is, or has been, a Councilor must not make improper use of their position to:
 - a. Gain, or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or any other person
 - b. Cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to the Council, or
 - c. Make improper use of information acquired because of their position.

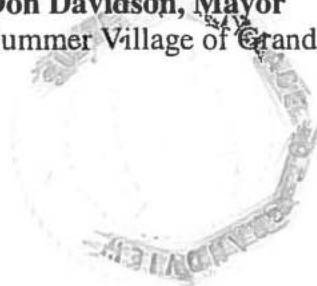
G. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

1. From time to time difficulties may occur in relationships between individual Councilors. It is expected that Councilors in this situation will use their best efforts to resolve such issues so that they do not interfere with the effective functioning of the Council.
2. Councilors shall not use public forums to discuss issues they may be having with other Councilors.
3. Where the issues cannot be resolved between the parties and the view of the Mayor is that the impact of potential impact is such that the good governance of the Summer Village may be affected, the following steps will be taken to resolve the matter:
 - a. Step 1 – The Mayor shall discuss the issues with the relevant Councilors and attempt to mediate an outcome acceptable to both parties. Should the dispute involve the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will undertake the mediation. Councilors will at all times attempt to resolve their issues without the need for external assistance as a demonstration of unity and teamwork. If the matter is not resolved after mediation has been undertaken, Councilors are able to seek advice from the CAO in an attempt to find solutions.
 - b. Step 2 – Should Step 1 be unsuccessful, the Mayor has the discretion to request, in writing, the CAO appoint an external professional mediator to be engaged to work through the issues with the relevant parties. In the event that the dispute involves the Mayor, this decision will be made by the Deputy Mayor.
 - c. Step 3 – Should the dispute still be unresolved, an independent arbitrator shall be appointed by Council to work with the parties and develop recommendations on how the dispute can be resolved.
4. Council shall consider those recommendations in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with the MGA and may on return to the open meeting, adopt a resolution based on those recommendations.
5. All Councilors shall abide by those resolutions.

End of Policy



Don Davidson, Mayor
Summer Village of Grandview



Sylvia Roy, CAO
Summer Village of Grandview